

**NEGRO LYNCHED
BY LAURENS MOB**

**Joe Stewart Hanged From River
Bridge—Inquiry to be Made.**

The State.

Laurens, April 2.—After an interval of nearly seven years, a Laurens negro has been executed without due process of law. Joe Stewart, aged 25, who had been employed for a year by a local coal dealer, was last night about midnight, as near as can be ascertained, taken from a station house cell, carried to the foot of Cemetery hill and hanged from the North Harper bridge over Little river. The rain soaked body was cut down and taken to an undertaker this morning.

Upon the arrival of the coroner, inquest proceedings were started with Solicitor Blackwell representing the state in the examination of witnesses. After four or five men had testified, including Chief of Police Blakely and Sheriff Reid, on motion of the solicitor, adjournment was taken until a future date with the view of ascertaining, if possible, additional evidence in the case.

Dr. W. D. Ferguson, who examined Stewart's body, testified that five stab wounds were on the body and his neck had been broken. Death was due to hanging and the wounds were not serious in his opinion.

The lynching of Stewart was the result of a fight earlier in the night with a party of young white men, three of whom were more or less painfully cut with a knife wielded by Stewart. The fight occurred on a back street near Harrison Hunter's shop. The negro received five stab wounds from which he bled freely until medical attention was given him.

It is said that the fight came by Stewart taking up for another negro, who, it is alleged, offended a young white boy by crushing against him as the negro was leaving the opera house about 7 o'clock. The boys, it is said, started to get the offending negro when they encountered Stewart, who challenged the boys and used abusive language which led to an immediate fight. All wounded parties had to have the attention of doctors. Up until 11 o'clock everything appeared quiet and most people went home. Chief Blakely and another policeman were on duty. The officers left the station house for a short time and when the chief returned the negro was gone. He had been removed from the cell, the door of which was forced open, and taken out through the rear of the building. So quietly was the work done that no one has been found who heard any unusual noises about the station at

the alleged time of Stewart's removal from his cell. It was not thought necessary by the officers to place the negro in jail as everything was apparently quiet and there was no apprehension of further trouble.

**REDUCTION IS MADE
IN NATIONAL DEBT**

Washington, April 2.—A reduction of \$705,660,000 in the national debt—more than double the amount by which the debt was lowered during any previous month—was accomplished during March, the treasury reported tonight. The national debt now stands at \$24,698,000,000.

Officials said this record could not be used as a basis for increasing further monthly reductions. They regarded it, however, as "sound evidence" of the success of the treasury program for financing the post-war period when government expenditures still continue to run high.

Began in August.

March payment on the public debt was confined almost wholly to retirement of certificates of indebtedness issued in anticipation of income and profit taxes. Reductions by month since August, when the retirements began, were: October, \$15,533,000; November, \$94,478,000; December, \$278,973,000; January, \$168,689,000 and February, \$264,057,000. Heavy payment on the debt in December and February both were traceable to the retirement of certificates of indebtedness, but the amount of obligations retired each month, although fluctuating, has been on the increase.

Hinges on Tax Legislation.

Future monthly reductions will hinge largely on new appropriations and tax legislation, officials said. They expected, however, that operations of the sinking fund would reflect more and more on the gross national debt each month hereafter. None would venture a prediction as to the net reduction for the calendar year.

As the public debt now stands it is made up of \$15,616,800,000 comprising the four issues of liberty bonds; \$4,422,700,000 of Victory short-term notes; \$2,367,220,000 in treasury certificates; and approximately \$1,000,000,000 in bonds issued prior to the world war.

The greatest single item among these old bonds is the issue of consols of 1930 which aggregate \$600,000,000.

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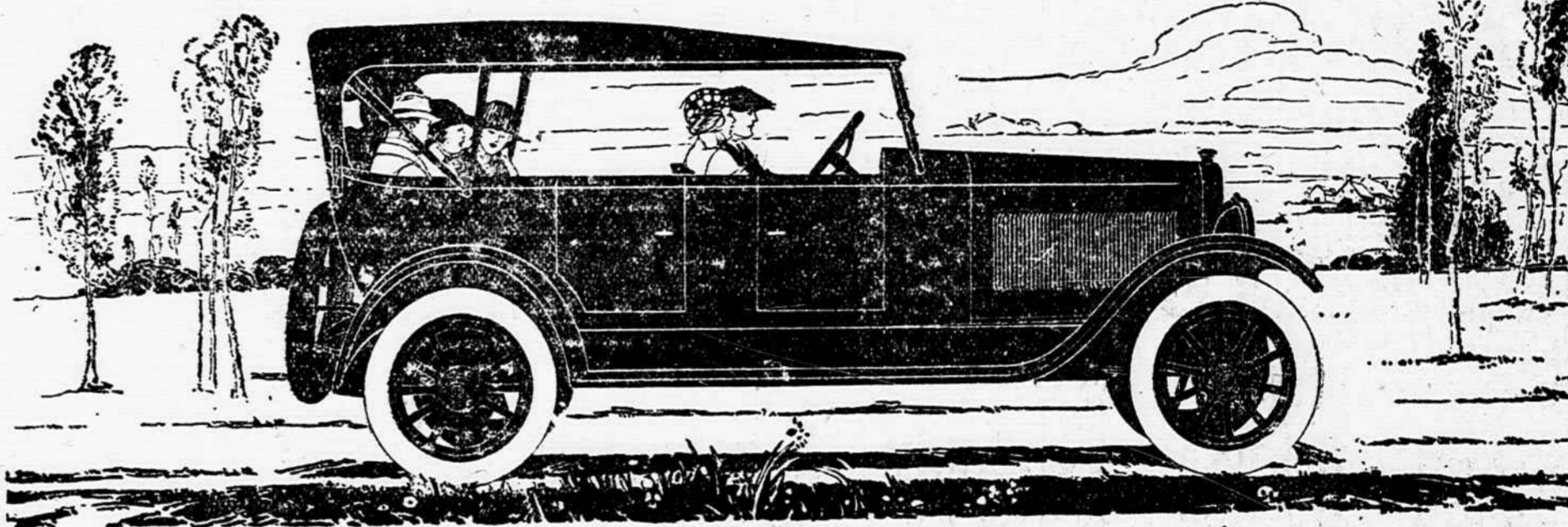
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